



# The hOLAgram

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A quarterly publication of the Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs (OLA)



**Latino Public Safety Forum ▲**

**OLA Guide diffusion ▼**



**▲ OLA Food Drive**

**Young Playwrights Theater ▼**



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## **MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD: REGISTER AND VOTE THIS YEAR**

Each year thousands of Latino immigrants become naturalized citizens and thus, gain their right to vote. However, almost half do not register to vote in their state or if they are registered they do not actually go out on Election Day to cast their vote. We then complain about how things are not working in the government or that monies are not being put into the services our communities need; not understanding that we can impact the policies of government by electing leaders with our values and vision in mind.

Today, Latinos are the largest minority in the US and this makes me think about the impact we can have on issues that concern our community such as poverty, health, education, housing, and immigration if we become more active civic participants

or civic LEADERS. In addition, imagine the impact we can have on our children by showing them that our voice matters locally and nationally!

It is important for us to realize that each citizen's vote is equal regardless of wealth, race, color, primary language, or education level. If you are not registered to vote and are a US citizen 18 years or older, I encourage you to contact the District's Board of Elections and Ethics for a voter registration form.

This year, I would like to see an increased number of Latino's voting in the November elections. To this end, OLA --with the assistance of many partners-- will conduct a voter registration and civic education campaign in upcoming spring and summer. We hope that this campaign will lead to

increased Latino civic participation.

Finally, let's not simply end there; we need to speak up and let our issues be known. Whether you are a US citizen or not you can become an active participant in your community. I ask that you find out about, attend, and make your voice heard at: Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC), Public Safety Advisory (PSA), and parent-teacher meetings.

### **Board of Elections and Ethics**

Voter registration forms  
in English and Spanish

Information on your locally elected  
officials (i.e., Council member,  
ANC commissioner).

**Phone:** (202)727-2525

**Webpage:** [www.dcobee.org](http://www.dcobee.org)

## **OLA, OAPIA, AND DCHA:**

### **WORKING HARD TO OFFER REAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR DC LEP CONSTITUENTS**

Latino community advocates have long voiced that DC Latinos --many of whom live in substandard private multi-family rental apartments-- do not have access to local resources targeted to meet the necessities of low-income families. Latino families are financially eligible for housing assistance, but often lack access to affordable housing due to linguistic and cultural barriers, as well as unbridled gentrification. Understanding this, OLA has supported efforts to maintain and increase affordable housing opportunities for low income individuals --particularly for those who are limited-English proficient (LEP).

Initial steps were taken during fiscal year 2005 to fully implement an innovative Linguistically-Isolated Tenant-Based Housing Choice Voucher Program. The program is working in partnership with the DC Housing Authority (DCHA) and the Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs

(OAPIA), as well as with several community-based organizations with expertise in the area of housing. This groundbreaking initiative, which was first made public by Mayor Anthony A. Williams, will allow LEP Latino and Asian DC residents the opportunity to receive a total of 100 DCHA Housing Choice Vouchers, and thus gain assistance to rent an affordable home for their families.

To this end, OLA and OAPIA have served as consultative agents to DCHA and qualified CBOs (e.g., Neighbors' Consejo, CARECEN, Columbia Heights/Shaw Family Support Collaborative, LEDC, CentroNía, The Family Place) to conduct outreach to inform the Latino and Asian communities about the new voucher preference, and other housing assistance services offered by the DC government. Once the CBOs identify and pre-screen eligible applicants, the list of pre-qualified LEP candidates will be

forwarded by OLA and OAPIA to DCHA for final processing and approval.

According to OLA's Director, Gustavo Velasquez, "this partnership is about eliminating the barriers to fair and affordable housing for our linguistically-isolated communities. It also demonstrates that Mayor Williams is committed to expanding housing choice opportunities and enhancing access to housing services for our Latino, and Asian and Pacific Islander families." To date, participating CBOs have received two training sessions from DCHA, OLA, and OAPIA. Moreover, DCHA has issued public announcements in leading Latino and Asian/Pacific Islander newspapers in order to spread the word about the new program throughout the city's major LEP communities. In terms of Spanish newspapers, DCHA placed ads in *El Pregonero*, *Washington Hispanic*, *Metrópolis*, and *El Tiempo Latino*.



## NEW GRANTEES FOR 2006

OLA's completed its grant competition process for the Fiscal Year 2006 cycle of the Latino Community Education grant (LCE) and the Latino Community Health grant (LCH). As a result, 17 new grants for LCE and two new grants for LCH were awarded.

The purpose of the LCE grant is to provide support for programs that offer culturally and linguistically appropriate services to the District's Latino community. Programs receiving support under this grant provide a range of quality training and educational services that increase Latinos' work skills or aim to decrease school drop out rates of Latino youth.

OLA's LCH grant provides support for programs that provide culturally and linguistically appropriate health services for Latino residents of the District. Services include, but are not limited to, early detection, prevention, treatment, and health education. Grantees under this program are community health clinics with proven expertise and a history of serving the Latino community.

Grants under the LCE and LCH program were awarded to the following organizations:

### LATINO COMMUNITY EDUCATION GRANTEES:

### AWARDS

♦ Barbara Chambers Children's Center	\$50,000
♦ Carlos Rosario International School	\$75,000
♦ Catholic Charities Downtown Family Center	\$60,000
♦ Central American Resource Center (CARECEN)	\$60,000
♦ CentroNia	\$50,000
♦ GALA Hispanic Theater	\$65,000
♦ La Clínica del Pueblo	\$50,000
♦ Language ETC	\$60,000
♦ Latino Economic Development Corporation	\$30,000
♦ Latino Student Fund	\$40,000
♦ Mary's Center for Maternal and Child Care	\$65,000
♦ Multicultural Career Intern Program	\$75,000
♦ Spanish Catholic Center	\$50,000
♦ Spanish Education Development Center	\$75,000
♦ The Family Place, Inc, Awarded	\$60,000
♦ Work, Achievement, Values & Education (WAVE)	\$50,000
♦ Young Playwrights' Theater	\$30,000

### LATINO COMMUNITY HEALTH GRANTEES

♦ La Clínica del Pueblo	\$85,000
♦ Mary's Center for Maternal and Child Care	\$285,000

## MORE GRANT FUNDING PROPOSED FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

Mayor Anthony A. Williams submitted to the District Council a budget enhancement for OLA's community-based funding for the upcoming fiscal year, starting October 1st 2006. This proposed increase is a response from Mayor Williams to fulfilling commitments previously made to the Latino community, including support in the areas of English learning, work skills and academic achievement. The increase is also a response to new ideas witnessed during Citizens Summit IV, where 19% of the total number of participants were Latino. Finally, the proposed increase addresses the recommendations submitted to the Mayor by the Latino Community Development Commission this past February.

## EXEMPLIFYING SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS

### SPANISH CATHOLIC CENTER:

The SCC's Pre-Apprenticeship Construction Program provides culturally and linguistically appropriate training, assessments, and job placement services in the construction industry. The Center assists Latino immigrants in developing portable skills in the construction trade (as measured by student scores on Contren performance tests), while working to improve English fluency and math skills, utilizing the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment (CASAS).

### WORK, ACHIEVEMENT, VALUES & EDUCATION (WAVE):

This organization's Opportunities for Leadership, Achievement, and Success (OLAS) Newcomer Peer Mentoring Program will pair 125 Latino newcomers (immigrant students in the country less than a year) with former newcomer students (students who have been in the country for at least 1 to 2 years).

This after school program and in-school program offered immigrant students structured opportunities to share experiences, gain new knowledge and skills, and build relationships to promote positive social behaviors. The program serves children that are enrolled at the Lincoln Middle School and Bell Multicultural High School.



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## Outreach

OLA organized and/or participated in the following events during the course of the past 6 months:

### MARCH 25:

#### **LATINO PUBLIC SAFETY FORUM**

The Metropolitan Police Department's (MPD) Latino Liaison Unit, in collaboration with MPD's Latino Advisory Council, coordinated the first of four Spanish language Latino Public Safety Forums. The forum came about as a response to increased complaints from Latinos relating to crimes inflicted on them, as well as fear or lack of understanding of the role of the police.

Presentations included Latino crime statistics and trends, reasons and implications for why Latinos do not report crimes, the police's role in immigration enforcement, appropriate use of the phone lines 311 and 911, and the crime victims compensation programs.

Three more forums will be held in Wards 1, 4, and 7. OLA expects that with time the outcomes of these forums will produce:

- Increased communication between the police and Latinos;
- Increased police knowledge and sensitivity towards Latinos;
- Increased Latino involvement in reporting crimes.

MPD and especially the Latino Liaison Unit (LLU) have stated that they are committed to following up with constituent requests for informational meetings. DC residents who wish to contact the LLU, schedule a

community meeting with them, and/or get more information on upcoming forums should call 202-673-4445.

### FEB 14:

#### **DC EITC TAX WORKSHOP**

A workshop for providers to explain the earned income tax credit, as well as information from the Internal Revenue Service on the benefits of filing taxes by undocumented immigrants.

### MAR 2:

#### **THE LATINO COMMUNITY PLANNING CONSULTATION FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVISION PROJECT**

A meeting organized by the Office of Planning and OLA focused on gathering input on the City's Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) from Latino community leaders, advocates, business owners, and outreach workers. The event was attended by at least 30 Latino community and media representatives, as well as members of several DC government agencies that directly working with limited-English proficient constituents.

### MAR 11:

#### **DC PARENTSMART PARENT ADVOCATE SUMMIT**

The summit provided educational information for parents and stakeholders.

### MAR 17:

#### **BRUCE-MONROE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HEALTH FAIR**

The fair provided parents and students with health services and information from government and community agencies.

### MAR 29:

#### **DC COLLEGE ACCESS PROGRAM COLLEGE FAIR**

The fair brought together students from across the city to meet and talk to different colleges, universities, and educational resource agencies.

### **THE DCGHEA COMMITTED TO SUPPORT THE HISPANIC COMMUNITY**

The DC Government Hispanic Employees Association (DCGHEA) is an organization with membership open to all, but primarily composed of DC Government employees. Now 20 years old, it is committed to developing programs and activities that promote the welfare of Hispanics that reside in the city and/or work in DC government. The association lends its support through events that are sponsored by the OLA, the Council on Latino Agencies, and/or other established groups.

Anyone wanting to join DCGHEA may contact the group by e-mail at [DCGHEA@hotmail.com](mailto:DCGHEA@hotmail.com) or by calling Patricia Walker, President at 202-255-6405.

## Upcoming events

### May 5:

#### **NATIONAL CINCO DE MAYO**

Festival: Contact the DC Arts Commission at (202) 724-1475.

### May 6:

#### **LATINO PUBLIC SAFETY FORUM II**

Contact Enrique Rivera at (202) 727-8752.

### May 21:

#### **ASTHMA DAY FAIR:**

Contact OLA at (202) 671-2825.

### June 4:

#### **MOUNT PLEASANT DAY FESTIVAL**

Contact Mount Pleasant Main Street Inc at (202) 588-5272.

### September 11:

#### **ADAMS MORGAN DAY FESTIVAL:**

Contact Adams Morgan Main Street, Inc. at (202) 232-1960.



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